WINCHELSEA PARISH MAGAZINE

4th November 2020

November Lockdown

Sunday Church Services

There will be no public worship in churches this month but St Thomas' will still be open for private prayer. Faith leaders have asked the government to reconsider the ban on public worship. *Faith Communities Letter*

Remembrance

Acts of Remembrance will take place on 8th and 11th.



New Hall and Community Hall

Winchelsea New Hall and Winchelsea Beach Community Hall will be closed throughout lockdown.

Post Office

The Court Hall Post Office will not open this month.

Winchelsea Arts Concert

The Hastings Philharmonic concert planned for 14th November is postponed, all being well, to 12th December.

Reflections from the Rectory

I have a family photograph that shows my mother's grandparents with their young family. I don't know the exact date but I think it must have been taken around 1905. In the centre seated are grandpa Povey, and granny Susan surrounded by six children, one of whom of course was my grandmother.

Uncle Reg and uncle George both served in the first war and both returned, although uncle George suffered from what was called "nerves" for the rest of his life. It wasn't until I was much older that I understood this must have been shellshock. I don't know whether uncle Reg was similarly affected, he was the elder of the two, because he died in 1919 during the Spanish flu epidemic.



This time of year is a time for remembering and although we don't want to think about it, remembering Spanish flu reminds us that although times were dark in the years following the First War and made darker by the pandemic, things recovered and although the world was changed a new normal and stability emerged.

I do not doubt that it will be the same this time although things seem difficult at present. But our own pandemic has changed the way we do so many things and will change Remembrance Sunday too.



Although there is a sadness to this time of year, as autumn turns to winter and things seem especially difficult this year, it is a season that I like.

It is a season of remembering, we remember those who have departed on 2nd November for All Souls and as we could not have a special service this year the names of those whom we have lost from the benefice were recited during our morning service on 1st November.

We remember the Gunpowder Plot and on the 11th and on Remembrance Sunday (8th November) we remember those who fell in the two World Wars. As it happens we don't remember those who died during the flu epidemic although rather more lost their lives than in combat.

When I lead a funeral or memorial service I'm always aware that far more than the person who was lost is remembered and offered to God. The moment we pause and reflect, often all those we have loved seem to be with us and as we remember the names of those brave men who died in war, we offer sadness and regrets on the altar of memory.

The ceremony ends with an act of commitment as it always does. We pledge ourselves to anew to the service of mankind and to the pursuit of peace.

This year let us also pray for all those who are anxious, who have lost loved ones or who feel isolated, in the conviction that the presence of God endures, that the human spirit is not overcome but shines triumphant throughout our community.

Jonathan Meyer



Acts of Remembrance on 8th and 11th November

Silence will be observed and Acts of Remembrance will take place at Winchelsea War Memorial at 11am on 8th November - Remembrance Sunday - and on Wednesday 11th November - Armistice Day.

The mayor and the rector will preside at the customary wreath laying at the memorial on 8th. Churches are closed for worship during lockdown and here will not be a Remembrance Service this year.

Distancing rules apply on both days.



Poppy Appeal

Donation tins and trays containing poppies and pins are available at The Farm Kitchen, The New Inn, Winchelsea Lodge, the Co-op, Sutton's Shop and The Ship Inn/Jamie's Butchers.

Donations will be gratefully accepted by the Royal British Legion (RBL) with gift aid being encouraged. A stock of gift aid envelopes is available at the back of the Church for cash or cheques (made payable to RBL Poppy Appeal) and these should be placed in the Black Box in the Church, or in any box at a static location, before 9 November.

Donations can be made electronically to the Royal British Legion, Sort Code 30-11-75, Account Number 01937121, using the payment reference SFF24. They can also be made by texting POPPY2, POPPY5, or POPPY10 (to donate £2, £5 or £10) to 70545.

If you have any particular requirements, or questions, with regard to purchases or donations, please call John Rodley on 01797 223458.

Gunpowder, treason and plot

Dear Friends and Members,

Thank you all very warmly for your support for Guy Fawkes Society this year, particularly those of you who have made donations and allowed us to keep your subs.

We will be back next year (Covid permitting) with a great programme of exciting events, and we look forward to seeing you all at these, as well as next year's Bonfire Night celebrations. In the meantime, we are looking forward to contributing to the Christmas Windows, so look out for us in the shop.

Best wishes, The Winchelsea Guy Fawkes Society





Hastings Philharmonic Orchestra concert postponed

This Winchelsea Arts concert has been rescheduled and will take place, all being well, on Saturday 12th December at 5.30pm. We will be in touch with everyone who bought tickets for the original date.

Two concerts are planned for next year:

Saturday 20th March

The Tara Minton Quintet present their new album, *Please Do Not Ignore The Mermaid.*

Saturday 15th May

Soloists from the Junior Department of the Royal College of Music.

www.winchelsea-arts.org.uk

Grand Christmas Raffle

£1 Tickets available at Winchelsea Farm Kitchen until 6th December. For the New Hall and Rye Food Bank. The draw will be made by the Mayor on 8th December. View the prizes at winchelsea.com/christmasraffle2020





HE Sown of Winchelsea formerly remarkable for its Strength and Beauty the new incoms a areant Grandeur still remaining this Monastery which was founded by William to Bloom organ Mary, King Edward Mon regard to the Novaler and Sanctity of the Santiation was a vivilege. Us no Notice is taken of it in the Monastion its probable it fell with other of the lope

Winchelsea Anniversaries

475 Years Ago

On 19th March 1545 King Henry VIII sold the site of the Winchelsea Greyfriars to George Clifford and Michael Welbore. The sale was freehold and 'for the benefit of their heirs, executors and administrators. Clifford and Welbore paid the very considerable sum of £736 11s od.

The king was reaping his reward for the acquisition of church land at the dissolution of the monasteries. Up to that time and since the dissolution the Winchelsea Greyfriars site and that of the Blackfriars had been managed on the monarch's behalf by Philip Chowte, Captain of Camber Castle.

At the Blackfriars site Chowte had made no attempt to preserve the buildings. As was customary in those days the stone was taken for use at Camber Castle. At the Greyfriars, however, the western range was converted into a gentry residence as it was to be for more than 250 years before being demolished by a new owner, Richard Stileman, later to be mayor, and replaced in 1819 by the building we know today.

We have some earlier records of the Greyfriars site at the time of the dissolution when it was surrendered to Richard Yngworth, Bishop of Dover, who reported to Thomas Cromwell that the site had been taken in the king's name.

Yngworth met no resistance. He noted that the Greyfriars at the time were very poor and that if the warden had been at home he 'would have given it up'. Later he re-visited and told Cromwell that he had 'sold the stuff', by which he meant the ornaments and furniture, and that 'the house is at the king's command and yours'.

Interestingly, the 1545 papers of the sale to Clifford and Welbore were endorsed with a memorandum stating that 'all the bells and metal and lead upon the premises were excluded'. That was more potential benefit for the monarch. Chowte must have been looking after the property well if bells, metal and lead had survived there!

While all this was going on the stone of the defunct and derelict Winchelsea's St Giles' Church was also being disposed of. Much of it was sold for the repair of Rye's town walls, particularly the section east of Landgate 'for which 300 tons of dressed stone was brought in, at least 150 tons of it from the remains of St Giles' Church'.

The former parish of St Giles had long been part of St Thomas' so perhaps the loss of that building had little impact. The loss of the influence of the friars, particularly the ways in which they provided for the poor, had, however, a great impact, and was long to be felt as Winchelsea struggled to replace that influence with secular provision.

Malcolm Pratt

Greyfriars ruins 'at risk'

So much of the Monastery buildings have been destroyed by our ancestors over the centuries leaving the chancel, one soaring arch and the Monks doorway as the only substantive surviving parts of the

monastery. It was given the status of a Nationally Important Ancient Monument originally by English Heritage.

Nonetheless this iconic 13th century ruin of the first Franciscan Monastery in England has remained stubbornly on the 'At Risk' register for years. (Historic England is the legal body that has been set up by Government in Westminster without any delegated powers of enforcement).



Recently more masonry has fallen down due to sapling growth on one wall and more looks likely to fall soon. Several self-seeded saplings thrive close to other parts of the chancel stonework and pose a threat.

The ownership of the ruins is complicated but we have to live in hope that they will not be allowed to deteriorate further, and that steps will be taken to save them for the nation and future generations.

Winchelsea Conservation Society Committee



The Town Well

The well-head is one of the structures owned by Winchelsea Corporation. The brick-lined shaft beneath is about 90 feet deep with running water, probably from a spring, at the bottom. Pictured here at some time in the 1880s, it was the first public well at the top of the town and opened in 1851. Before that, most people had to carry water up from the bottom of the hill.



Be a sponsor of 'Light Up Winchelsea'

From December 6th and over Christmas we plan to 'Light up Winchelsea'. Over 50 households have already promised to create a festive window to cheer us up during these challenging times. Our chosen charity this year is St. Thomas's Church at the heart of our community.

We hope that the centrepiece will be the lighting up of the beautiful windows in St. Thomas's as it has some of the finest early 20th century glass in the country. Wouldn't it be wonderful if they and the outside of the church were also lit throughout the festive season? To light each of the nine windows and flood the outside of the church with light would be a truly remarkable sight and something we could all enjoy.

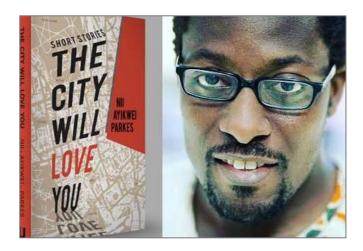
We need sponsorship for this part of the event and have already had some funds pledged towards it.
We have found a specialist company to do the work.

We need to raise £1000, so we are asking anyone who feels they can, to help out. £75 would help light a stained-glass window. £45 would floodlight one side of the church and £10 would help with the cabling. We've got just a few weeks to raise the money so please give whatever you can afford to "Light up Winchelsea" and make this event a success. If we are fortunate enough to raise more than we actually need, that money will be channelled into the general fundraising effort.

You can sponsor the lighting of the church windows on our Crowd Funding page at <u>www.crowdfunder.co.uk</u>

The interior of the church was transformed after the Great War by the insertion of some of the finest stained glass of the modern era – a complete set of windows by Scottish artist Douglas Strachan. These were dedicated in 1933 by the Archbishop of Canterbury in a service broadcast to the nation by the BBC. winchelseachurch.co.uk/visit-us/stained-glass/

A general fundraising Just Giving page will go live around the end of November. Thank you on behalf of the Winchelsea Christmas Windows Group 2020.



Literary Society

The society holds its next Members' Evening on Friday 6th November at 7pm for 7.30 on Zoom. The theme is 'Secrets and Lies'. Members are invited to bring two or three readings or something a bit longer this time as sometimes we have more time.

On 20th November Nii Ayikwei Parkes, Ghanaian performance poet, talks on 'Midlife: Views and Poetics'.

Anyone wishing to join in who isn't on our usual contact list please email Hilary Roome - *WinLitSoc@gmail.com*

On 11th December, in a change to the published programme, Howard Norton will present his evening of delights 'with great pleasure....'

Zoom invitations are sent out the day before. Anyone wanting some help with using Zoom, please contact Hilary.



Second Wednesday talk

On 11th November at 2:15 for 2:30pm, Melanie Gibson-Barton will talk on Suffragettes and Suffragists. Anyone not usually on our contact list please contact Hilary Roome - 2ndWeds@gmail.com for a Zoom invitation.



World Polio Day

October 24th was World Polio Day. Rotary Clubs around the world have been fundraising to eradicate polio for more than 35 years and our goal of ridding the world of Polio closer than ever.

The Rotary Club of Rye & Winchelsea is raising awareness locally this year by planting purple crocus in and around the 'tank traps' at the new Community Wellbeing Centre for Rye - the Hub on the Hill.

Private and public buildings were also turned purple to mark the day. This year St Thomas' and the Hub on the Hill, Rye Hospital turned their building purple to mark the event.

Thanks to the Rector for his support and to Paine's Electricians for setting up and removing the lights.



Marsh Harrier - Pannel Valley Robbie Gooders

Birds of prey all around us

When David Page reminded me that I had once mentioned the number of different birds of prey that can be seen in and around Winchelsea and asked me if I could write about them, I got into a bit of a panic.

So let's start with a bird of prey that doesn't quite fit the scenario... a Bearded Vulture! This is a real rarity that has been in the UK this summer, albeit in Derbyshire, the Fens, Bedfordshire and Kent, before finally heading across the Channel from Beachy Head on 15th October 2020. Missed that one!

My personal list for 2020 started with a migrating Osprey that I saw over Winchelsea on 23rd March - no doubt heading north to its breeding grounds in Rutland, the Lake District and Scotland.

Next, Common Buzzard which is common and breeds in our area and can be seen almost daily. This was followed by two Red Kites on 7th May over the Pannel Valley.

They are spreading south and can be seen fairly regularly. That was a good day because along with the Red Kites, I saw Buzzard, Kestrel (common here, particularly over the A259 between Winchelsea and

Icklesham) and Marsh Harrier which breeds at Rye Harbour Nature Reserve.

This summer past, despite lockdown, has been pretty good in our area. Sparrowhawk is relatively common over Winchelsea as is Hobby at the Nature Reserve and Peregrine at Pett and Fairlight. Goshawk is not regular but has been seen as has Honey Buzzard.

There was a buzz of excitement in mid-summer when a young White-tailed Eagle from a new reintroduction programme on the Isle of Wight made its way down the Channel almost to Rye Harbour.

As autumn turns to winter, look out for Merlin, Roughlegged Buzzard (rare) and Hen Harrier (equally rare).

So I make that 14 different species of birds of prey (not counting the Bearded Vulture) and a birder friend told me that we have had Red-footed Falcons in the past over our part of the world! Aren't we lucky!

Robbie Gooders

www.rspb.org.uk/bird-a-z

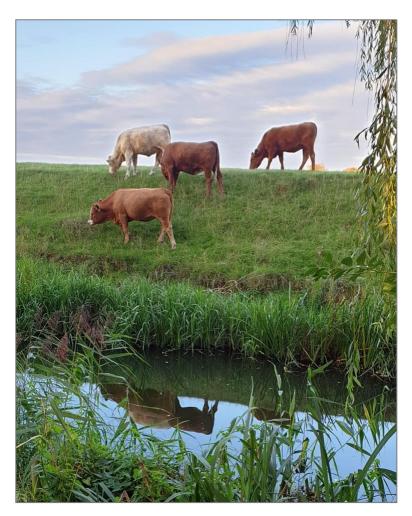


Winchelsea Beach Community Hall

The Hall is now closed until December 2nd.

December events - the Christmas meal, Carols Round the Tree and the Children's Party - have all been cancelled.

For more information and to enquire about booking the Hall post-lockdown, please contact chairman, Geoff Foot 07802 322315.



Cattle grazing on the banks of the River Brede



A taste of summer for charity

A taste of summer for sale - proceeds to Rye Food Bank. Crab apple jelly, blackcurrant jelly, quince jelly, and membrillo, all made with donated local fruit. Nicely finished with gingham tops and hand painted labels, so suitable as small gifts. Large pots £2, smaller pots £1.20 - make up a gift basket maybe?

Call Anne Simpson on 01797 222658 to arrange collection from her porch at 1 Hiham Gardens

Rye Food Bank

Details for donation by direct transfer are 'Bexhill Food Bank, Rye Branch' Barclay's 20-54-25 a/c 83501116.

Cheques can be made out to 'Bexhill Food Bank (Rye Branch)' and sent to C. Emson, 24 North Salts, Rye, TN31 7NU.

Please continue to donate if you can.

www.trusselltrust.org



Icklesham Parish Council

The new Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer is Miss Claire Dyer. She can be contacted on all matters relating to the work of Icklesham Parish Council: PO Box 395, Hastings TN34 9JU 07714 169901 ickleshampc@hotmail.co.uk

Claire takes over from Anna Evett who left earlier in the autumn to take up a new post with Rother District Council.

Cllr Peter Turner <u>www.ickleshampc.org</u>



Thanks from Joyce

Joyce Shann sends her thanks the many people who sent cards and good wishes following her heart attack. 'We are very lucky to live in a supportive community like Winchelsea', she says. Joyce is currently filling herself with pills and taking things easy at home.



Jigsaws and books

If you are running out of ways to pass the time during lockdown, Howard Norton has plenty of jigsaws and lots of books he'd be happy to swap or share.

He promises that not all the books are about gardening. howard@ryeview.net 01797 226524



Don Clarke

Don died on 13th October. He was 84. Although the onset of dementia meant that his final years were spent in residential care, over the previous decade Don had been an active participant in town and church life.

Born in the West Midlands, with a fund of Black Country Enoch and Eli jokes, Don's childhood and education were severely disrupted by TB. He did not let this hold him back, gaining a PhD in Psychology, becoming director of a BMA medical education charity and then a member of the World Health Organisation staff, based in Copenhagen and Geneva and working in a multitude of countries. The coma arousal kit he devised is the prototype of kits widely used with braindamaged patients today.

In retirement he turned to local politics as a parish council chairman and then as a borough councillor in Bedford. In Winchelsea, he chaired Conservation Society.

A sports enthusiast, and not to be disturbed when there was a test match on, Don was a formidable and intuitive bridge player. As he would appositely say, often after making an outrageously risky bid, 'Rules are made for the guidance of wise men and the obedience of fools'.



Celebrating Mary

Mary Hodgson's funeral took place at St Thomas' on 8th October. In normal circumstances the church would have been full, but Covid rules made this impossible. Ann Spencer and Geraldine I'Anson Lusk led the tributes and you can read them in full here: www.winchelsea.com Here is part of what was said.

Joan Mary Chevallier Hodgson 1922-2020

Mary had a full and diverse life in her 97 years from her much loved time in the Wrens during the war, to her 74 years in Winchelsea which she came to with her mother in 1946.

Once Mary was released from her military service, she settled down to civilian life in Winchelsea and set about finding work. She began to learn about horticulture through a neighbour who taught her about plants, and so began her life as a gardener. She would also undertake household duties, and took pleasure in cleaning silver and brass for some of her clients.

It was through these activities around the town that Mary found the source of many of her stories. She could have been the Town archivist, she knew so much about her neighbours and the history of their houses. She was to become affectionately known by many, as Mary 'Socks', as her daily uniform to set about her various jobs around the town, was to wear grey culottes and white ankle socks.

Many of you will, remember her gift as a remarkable story teller. It was not merely that she had the stories to tell, but it was the way she told them. They were often full of whimsy, certainly humour, and so descriptive with even a hint of drama, told with a twinkle and just a little mischief too, like her first meeting with the Rector.

He arrived looking forward to meeting this 95 year old lady about whom he had heard so much. To his surprise, he was dismissed as soon as Mary opened the front door. 'Sorry can't see you now!' As Jonathan made his way back down the front steps, the door reopened.

'Wait, I need you! I have a mouse or rat in my yard can you remove it?' 'Of course', came the reply. He went into her yard and gathering up the offending rodent, Mary cheerfully suggested that he throw it over the fence into the neighbouring garden. Which fence was were the story became inconclusive.

But her distaste for rodent life did not affect her passion for the country and a great interest in wildlife. She longed for the arrival of the swifts, and would be thrilled if you could tell her that you had heard the first cuckoo. She was very knowledgeable, not only about so many species of birds, but also had a passion for owls, and concern about their numbers.

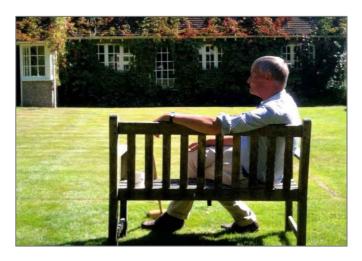
Fortunately for Mary we had a distinguished ornithologist in the town who would take her on several memorable outing to visit local owl colonies. Bumble bees were a constant focus in the summer, and she became quite distressed if she could not find any in her garden.

Mary was very sociable as many of you will know, and loved to entertain, receiving daily visitors to *Ivy Cottage*. When also being entertained, she would meticulously return the complement, with coffee, or afternoon tea and of course drinks at 6pm.

In addition to all her country pursuits, she loved horse racing, and indeed at aged 80 with her energy undiminished, she took up another activity. It was after having taken a ride in a horse and trap at the Winchelsea Fete that she declared she wanted to take carriage driving lessons. She did, followed by one or two alarming exploits. Whilst her new interest was short-lived it gave her enormous pleasure.

As we reflect on happy memories of Mary's life, we can enjoy the stories we were able to share with her. She will remain forever unforgettable as a unique character. In fact she made sure of that.

One day getting off the bus, returning from the dentist with an extracted tooth, she thought it would be fun to plant it in the cement mortar of the newly built bus shelter, telling all who heard the story, 'This will ensure there will always be a bit of me that will remain in Winchelsea'.



Peter Mackenzie Smith

I am so grateful to all the many people who have offered such kind words about Peter and for all the many offers of help, prayers and support. All these have been such a comfort to me and the family. Thank you all so much. Sandra Mackenzie Smith



Remembered

The spire is like so many of its kind That punctuate the hamlets of this land, And watches over every grassy mound Where gravestones to the great and lowly stand. There's Albert Fagge, the Private aged nineteen, For whom no urn or flowers mark his grave. And Major Hay, who serving on the Somme, Was asked to give his life, and gladly gave. For him, a verse proclaiming he's called home, Back to the arms of God, in florid script. For Albert Fagge, a badly-chiselled slab Spells out his name and rank, one letter chipped. Could Albert read? And did the Major seem Another Cromwell in the fields of France? They're gone. But to their solitary graves Battalions of white snowdrops make advance.

Gillian Southgate

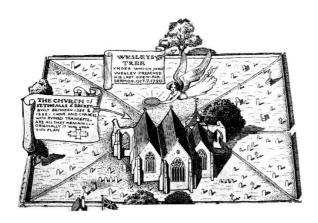
Please send copy for the December Magazine to <u>david@ryeview.net</u> on or before Monday 30th November

For Winchelsea Beach information go to www.winchelseabeachcommunityassociation.co.uk

For Winchelsea information go to www.winchelsea.com

For more information about the Church go to <u>www.winchelseachurch.co.uk</u>

For weekly news about the local area go to <u>www.ryenews.org.uk</u>



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